

Courier

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Transportation Summit explores problems and solutions

It was Mark Twain who said, "Everyone talks about the weather but no one does anything about it." In Northern Virginia and the metropolitan area, "transportation" can be added to that statement.

However, there is more going on now to resolve area transportation problems

than ever before.

On March 14, Springfield District Supervisor **Elaine McConnell**, chairperson of the Board of Supervisors Transportation Subcommittee, along with the county Transportation Advisory

Commission, held a one-day seminar to look at area transportation issues

See Summit, page 2



Mary Lynn Tischer



Katherine K. Hanley



Alan Pisarski

DFS' Office for Children receives NACo award for SACC program

When you do something good, it's nice to be recognized for it. The Department of Family Services has garnered a top prize from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for the Office for Children's School Age Child Care (SACC) program "Children Helping Children." This community service project has been selected as a winner of a NACo 2005 Acts of Caring award, one of only three programs for children and youth awarded nationally.

What makes this program so unique and an award winner? According to

Judith Rosen, director of the Office for Children, the project encourages children and staff at SACC's 131 child care centers throughout the county to partner with their communities, and respond to the needs of other children and families. "The success of SACC's "Children Helping Children" program has been phenomenal," said Rosen. "It has expanded from just a few centers in 2000 to 131 SACC centers in 2005."

Projects range from specific activities like clothing exchanges at individual centers to

See SACC, page 3

Administrative Professionals Day

In Honor of Support Staff

In honor of Administrative Professionals Day, the county will hold its seventh annual all-day Career and Professional Development Conference for administrative staff on Friday, April

22. This year the theme of the conference is "Life's Puzzle: Fitting the Pieces Together."

The conference is developed and designed by the Administrative Resource Team (ART) to enhance the skills and professionalism of their colleagues in Fairfax County government. It will provide participants the chance to attend informative workshops, listen to inspiring speakers and network with other county support staff as they look for ways to add value to the workplace, to the community, to their families and to their personal lives.

I encourage all administrative support staff to take advantage of this conference and ask that agency directors facilitate the opportunity for their staff to attend.



Tony Griffin,
County Executive

Tony Griffin

**Career and Professional
Development Conference for
Admin Support Staff**
**"Life's Puzzle: Fitting the Pieces
Together"**
Friday, April 22
7:45 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Government Center

- Keynote motivational speakers: Teri-E Belf and Mark Gorkin
- Eat lunch while enjoying entertainment in the Forum and the Recycling Roadshow in the Atrium.
- Catch a preview of this year's workshops on <http://Infoweb/hr/art>
- Watch for registration forms available April 6.

Summit, from page 1

and explore recommendations for resolution.

Supervisor McConnell welcomed more than 200 invited attendees by confirming that the high growth in the area has kept our transportation problems ahead of solutions. Three key speakers gave their professional assessments of the transportation issues.

Mary Lynn Tischer, special assistant on transportation to Gov. Mark Warner, painted a grim financial picture regarding state transportation funding. She said that over the next 20 years there are \$203 billion in transportation needs identified with only \$95 billion expected revenue. Virginia will not be able to match federal funds after 2014, causing the overall transportation funding to shrink in a time of greater need.

Katherine K. Hanley, former chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and presently serving as the Northern Virginia representative to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, explained a very compli-

cated and involved funding process, pointing out that federal funds are the largest single source of funding to the highway construction program. Other sources include state, regional and local funding, all shrinking sources in light of needs.

Alan Pisarski, author and expert on national and regional commuting patterns, told the audience that the average Fairfax resident takes 31 minutes to commute to work. He said the present national transportation goal seems to be: making things get worse – slower!

Pisarski pointed out some solutions that included using tolls, letting the private sector do the work and developing partnerships with the business community. The real solution, he concluded, is a unified dedication to solving the transportation problem.

Later, attendees joined one of nine working groups to discuss specific topics and make recommendations. Summaries of the Transportation Summit will be posted on the county Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/tac/. ■

SACC, from page 1

a much wider partnership with Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children. The capabilities of the



Children learn community responsibilities.

county are magnified when partners, such as Inova, are brought into the program. Plans continue to expand the effectiveness of SACC to include not only children but their families, school community, local organizations and businesses.

More than 10,000 children and 600 staff are actively engaged in "Children Helping Children." "This is a wonderful program that encourages children, working with adults, to help other children in their communities," said **Pat Diehl**, director of SACC.

Offering before and after-school care and activities for children for the last 25 years, SACC has developed innovative programming that nurtures creative expression, supports independent thinking, and encourages cooperation and teamwork. "The dollar value of the SACC childrens'

volunteer time can't be calculated," said Rosen, who pointed out that the ultimate value will be shown over the lifetime of the children who learn at an early age to give back to their communities. "The outcome is priceless," she said.

The leadership of the county - from the Board of Supervisors to the county executive - has recognized the importance of SACC with continuing budgetary support. "SACC and similar programs become increasingly important to the county as we face some of the problems associated with gangs and gang prevention situations," said **Tony Griffin**, county executive.

The NACo award, recognizing innovative county volunteer programs, will be presented on April 13. Supervisor **Gerry Hyland** will accept the award at a special recognition luncheon on Capitol Hill.

For more information on SACC and the "Children Helping Children" project, contact **Gail Bjorklund**, OFC senior program manager, 703-324-8225, TTY 711. ■

Some of the children on a field trip to Inova Fairfax Hospital.



Telecommunicator's Week salutes 911 call takers and dispatchers

National Telecommunicator's Week is April 11 – 15. This week is recognized yearly for the tireless service provided by 911 call takers and dispatchers everywhere. These men and women work 24 hours a day 7 days a week to provide emergency, as well as nonemergency assistance, to each citizen who calls. In Fairfax County, the 911 Center is located at 3911 Woodburn Road in Annandale. During this week, Fairfax County will be holding an awards ceremony to recognize individuals in various categories for the excellent work they display on a daily basis.

On April 15 from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m., the 911 Center is holding an open house for the citizens of Fairfax County. We highly encourage everyone to come visit our center and meet the exemplary employees who dedicate each day to providing the most professional service to you, the citizens of Fairfax County. You can see first hand how emergency calls for assistance are handled. Please stop by and say hello and thank these employees for their hard work and dedication. ■

Contests set for three EAC groups

The Employees Advisory Council (EAC) election campaign is underway and includes races for representatives in three groups up for election: Groups 1, 6, and 8. Ballots must be received by interoffice or U.S. mail by close of business April 28.

The following candidates are running in the indicated groups.

♦ Group 1 (Police Department, O & P Pay Scale Employees) are **Timothy Field** and **Beverly Sellers**.

♦ Group 6 (Department of Family Services) are **Joyce Lawson** and **Matthew Vaughan**.

♦ Group 8 (Health Department and Library) candidates are **Nevin Albert** and **Dori DeSpain**.

♦ Group 3 (Department of Public Works and Environmental Services), **Karen Conchar** and Group 7 (Board of Supervisors, County Executive's Office, County Attorney's Office, Human Resources, Tax Administration, Finance, Retirement Administration, Management and Budget, Information Technology, Public Affairs, Elections and Registrar), **Randy Creller**, are unopposed so no elections will be conducted.

Voting information

Ballots will be mailed to employees in all of the voting groups during the week of April 4. Ballot packages will contain statements from the candidates and an addressed, stamped envelope that is to be mailed to the Department of Human Resources with the completed ballot.

Employees must return ballots by interoffice or U.S. mail to be received by close of business April 28. Ballots will be counted April 29 and winners announced in the May 13 *Courier*.

Questions? Call **Bob Fitzpatrick** at 703-324-3306 or contact him by e-mail at Robert.Fitzpatrick@fairfaxcounty.gov.



Campaign Statements

Group 1 O & P Pay Scale Employees

Timothy Field
Police Department

I am running for a position on the Employee Advisory Council to represent the interests of Police Department employees. I have been with the department for 18 years and believe my experience will enable me to effectively understand and advocate for the issues most important to my fellow employees.

Beverly Sellers
Police Department

My name is Beverly (Tuck) Sellers. I have been a member of the Fairfax County Police Department for the past 15 years. Eight of those years were spent serving in patrol,

while the other seven have been served either as a School Resource Officer (SRO) or School Education Officer (SEO). I am currently the School Education Officer 1 at the Reston District Station.

Even though I am a SEO, I still try to keep up with the policies and procedures that affect each and every one of us on a daily basis as we perform our regular duties as Police Officers. If I do not know the answer, there are always ways to research matters of interest.

If you choose to elect me as your EAC representative, I will do my best to make good recommendations on matters of policies and procedures that affect you as an officer. Thank you for your time and attention in this matter. *See EAC, page 5*

EAC, from page 4

Group 6

Department of Family Services

Joyce Lawson

Department of Family Services

"Why I'm voting again for Joyce Lawson as my EAC representative.

I have known Joyce for 10 years. Many times, I have observed how she has worked with county employees and the public in general. She always has the county employees and the public's best interest at heart.

When I have leaned on Joyce for guidance, she has always responded in a timely manner. Joyce carefully listens to people's concerns, gathers information and facts, and clarifies any unclear information before making any assumption or conclusions.

Joyce values confidentiality and uses a secured phone line when making her calls. She is proactive in helping county employees resolve issues fairly. I especially treasure that she takes the time to follow up with people to see how they are doing. She exudes genuineness and this special trait sure comes across."

- Employee testimony

Matthew Vaughan

Department of Family Services

Thank you for considering me for your EAC representative. I currently manage the day-to-day operations of programs funded by the U. S. Department of Labor that assist job seekers and businesses in meeting their workforce needs. My professional background exposes me to issues you may be facing. As a manager, and in previous positions in direct service to customers, I have demonstrated excellent listening skills and can articulate your needs to the management of Fairfax County. I promise to represent you with the utmost integrity. I am an innovative thinker who is not afraid to question the "status quo."

Group 8

Health Department & Library

Nevin Albert

Library

This is my eleventh year of employment

with the Fairfax County Public Library. I work as Associate Circulation Manager at Reston Regional Library.

I am seeking to be the Group 8 Employee Advisory Council (EAC) Representative because I want to assist in positive changes in the workplace. If you elect me as your representative, I will represent your interests on issues such as the Pay for Performance, Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP), overtime and flexible working hours. My plan is to open these issues for discussion and to use your input.

Currently, there is something wrong when "Fully Proficient" does not meet the cost of living. We as employees should be able to live in this community.

When you receive your ballot, please make the time and take the opportunity to vote for me.

Dori DeSpain

Library

I have been privileged to represent the Health Department and Library for several years now. In doing so, I have met many wonderful, hard-working employees and have gained invaluable insight into the workings of county government and how best to effect change and improve the lives of employees. If reelected, I will continue to utilize this knowledge and experience on your behalf as your EAC representative. Pay for Performance continues to be an issue of major concern. Despite annual tweaking, there are several ways to improve P4P so that it becomes what it purports to be—a way to fairly and adequately reward employees for services rendered. If Fairfax County Government is to remain a leader in the field of local government, it must attract and retain a talented, skilled workforce; for, while many exceptional employees may come to Fairfax, they will remain only if they are being treated fairly and rewarded commensurate with their knowledge, abilities and labor. With your support, I will continue to work to resolve disputes, offer assistance and speak on your behalf to ensure that your concerns are brought to the forefront. ■

**Return ballots
by interoffice or
U.S. mail by
close of
business
April 28.**

***Classified ads
are on the
Infoweb***

JIC keeps the messages straight

The recent anthrax alert that temporarily closed some area office buildings and a postal facility had a good ending – no anthrax was found. The alert also allowed a close examination of the area's reaction capabilities, some passing with flying colors, such as the county Fire & Rescue and Health

“Activating the JIC showed there is an effective communications structure that can respond to emergency situations...”

Department response, and some revealing the need for better coordination between organizations. One of the successes emanating from

the alert was the activation of the national capital region's Joint Information Center.

“This was the first time a JIC has been activated by Fairfax County and we were very pleased with the results,” said **Merni Fitzgerald**, director of the county's Office of Public Affairs who also served as the head of the JIC.

When activated in the event of an area-wide emergency, a JIC brings together representatives of key area organizations to

streamline the information coordination process. For example, by activating the JIC for this alert, representatives of county agencies, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, Arlington County, Pentagon, Red Cross, Virginia Department of Emergency Management and others worked together in one location to jointly exchange information, provide status to participating and other appropriate agencies, and ensure consistent and timely messages were provided to the public through media channels.

The JIC was active for two days during the alert and was located in the county's Alternate Emergency Operations Center in the Government Center. “Although a real emergency didn't materialize, this was an excellent test of the cooperative concept. It gave us some great results, verifying strengths and indicating areas for improvement,” said Fitzgerald.

Activating the JIC showed there is an effective communications structure that can respond to emergency situations and provide coordinated and reliable information. ■

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Keeping kids safe – protecting the children of Fairfax County from abuse and neglect is a community responsibility shared by the Department of Family Services and its community partners. At a recent Board of Supervisors meeting, the month of April was proclaimed as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

A key component in the county's effort to keep kids safe is the Fairfax County Blue Ribbon Campaign, which brings together public and private organizations, as well as individuals, to educate county residents about how to recognize and prevent child abuse and neglect. This important work is ongoing nationally, with a special focus in April when the community is encouraged to wear a blue ribbon to show support for the campaign.

The tragedy of child maltreatment can result from a family history of abuse, mental

health and substance abuse problems, financial difficulties and a general lack of parenting skills. Last year the county's Child Protective Services Hotline received more than 35,000 calls from people seeking help, guidance and referrals to programs and support services.

Displays with educational materials will be in the lobbies of the Government Center and the five county regional offices during the month of April. County staff is encouraged to visit one of the Fairfax County Blue Ribbon Campaign, “Keeping Kids Safe” displays and learn more about what you can do to prevent child abuse. To report suspected child abuse or neglect, or to seek guidance on abuse, call the Child Protective Services Hotline at 703-324-7400 or TTY 703-222-9452. – by Joe Battista, DFS ■



Briefs

Hazmat Preparation

The county has procedures for determining if a letter/package is suspicious and should be evaluated as a hazardous materials item. Here are some guidelines:

- ♦ Information about anthrax and procedures for persons handling mail is available on the county's Infoweb at <http://infoweb/opa/handling.htm>. Forward this link and information to your staff and fellow employees, and use it in agency-wide training sessions.

- ♦ Facility emergency response coordinators (ERCs) should review their emergency response procedures in the event of an anthrax or other hazmat incident.

- ♦ Contact **Teri Flynn** at 703-324-3599, TTY 711, or **Amin Abdul-Aziz** at 703-324-3063, TTY 711, in the Risk Management Division of the Department of Finance if you need more information.

Recycle Your Old Computer

Recycle your old computer on Saturday, April 9, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Chantilly High School, 4201 Stringfellow Road in Chantilly. The computers are collected by ServiceSource, a local nonprofit that employs people with disabilities. There is a \$10 processing fee for CRT monitors. All other computer equipment is processed free of charge. The value of the donated computer and the processing fee are tax deductible. For more information, contact **Meredith Eisenberg**, DPWES' Solid Waste Collection and Recycling at 703-324-5313, TTY 711.

Medical Reserve Corps

Volunteers are needed for the Fairfax Medical Reserve Corps. Both medical and nonmedical professions are needed.

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Especially needed are seasoned, experienced managers to fill Medical Reserve Corps leadership positions, including incident coordinator, branch director, volunteer coordinator and unit leader. All volunteers will receive the necessary training to fulfill their responsibilities.

"Despite the name of the program, the majority of the volunteers needed for the Medical Reserve Corps are individuals without a medical background," said **Donna Foster**, MRC coordinator for the Health Department.

Register online at the Fairfax Medical Reserve Corps Web site www.fairfaxmrc.org/ or by calling 703-246-2433, TTY 703-591-6435.

No Money for Food?

You don't have to have cash to enjoy some of the terrific new menu selections being offered at the cafeteria in the Government Center. But you do have to have a standard credit card!

Customers can now pay for their meals by credit card at the cafeteria, according to **Frank Daphin**, manager of the Guest Services-operated facility in the Government Center. "This is a new service that we hope helps our customers," said Daphin, who pointed out that the service is only for food – no cash back!

Volunteers Needed at Mission of Mercy III

The Fairfax County Health Department and other human service agencies are helping to identify the area's neediest children and adults to receive free dental care at the annual Mission of Mercy (MOMs III) project, April 15 - 17. MOMs III is a regional event coordinated by the Virginia Dental Association. More

Briefs

than 400 volunteers are needed, including dentists, hygienists, nurses and other health professionals. Nonclinical helpers also are needed for patient registration, interpretation, helping with forms, food service and limited child care. Especially needed are those who speak English and another language fluently. MOMs III will be at the Medical Education Campus of the Northern Virginia Community College in Springfield during the indicated dates. Call the Health Department at 703-246-2411, TTY 703-591-6435, and see how you can help.

Computer Updates

Remember to leave your computer workstation powered on and logged off when leaving for the day so your computer can receive updates. These updates may cause computers to restart. To leave your workstation powered on, but logged off:

- ♦ From the START menu, select "Shut Down"

- ♦ When the dialog box appears and asks "What do you want the computer to do?" just select Restart from the drop down list.

- ♦ Click OK.

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact your agency technical support or the Technical Support Center at 703-222-3535, option 1 (voice), TTY 711.

Facts, Stats & Data

The Library's Information Central can help you find facts, statistics and other data you need for your agency's projects and reports. Information Central will find and send you articles or records from a wide array of print and electronic resources. For details, call **MaryAnn Sheehan**, 703-324-8343, TTY 703-324-8365, or fill out a request on the Library's Infoweb page. ■

Security & Safety Matters

Correcting bad habits – learning the hard way

After three years of documenting security incidents at county facilities, I have noticed a few lapses in security awareness that seem to repeat regularly. I'll take a few moments to review these.

1. Theft of both personal and county-owned property is the number one reported security incident. Through security awareness training classes, *Courier* articles and new hire orientation briefings, county employees have been reminded regularly to secure their personal valuables and county property, such as purses and laptops. Yet, consistently, when asked if the stolen purse or laptop was locked up, the answer is always "no." Theft is a target of opportunity and a theft can literally take a minute to occur. In Oct. 2004, the *Washington Post* noted that the FCPD arrested an alleged professional office thief who targeted office buildings where he would dress conservatively and blend in. Five minutes isn't a lot of time to be away from your wallet, but this

guy needed just 30 seconds. Often, identity theft is the result of the loss of your personal property – your driver's license and credit cards.

Lesson Learned: Secure your valuables at all times and that includes county property such as laptops.

2. The county requires that all employees **wear county photo ID visibly** at all times, while at a work site which includes serving citizens in the field. Yet, many employees do not wear their photo IDs or else "hide" them on their waists under a jacket or sweater. Awareness includes noticing un-badged individuals in your work area and asking if you can help them.

Lesson Learned: Remember the alleged thief who targeted facilities that did not require or ask for IDs. Most county facilities are open to the public and, therefore, people without photo IDs. As employees, we need to challenge those who are back in our work areas without visible photo IDs.

3. For some departments and agencies, **access into secure areas** requires an access card. These cards are coded specifically for the individual user with dates/times and locations for authorized access. Each time the card is used, it creates an audit trail showing who entered, where they entered, and the time entered. Yet some employees lend their access cards to others, or hold secure doors open for those following behind.

Lesson Learned: Either of these actions could result in a serious security situation by allowing unauthorized individuals into secure space.

Awareness of these security issues and correcting our bad habits will help reduce the number of reported incidents and also help ensure that we continue to have a safe and secure work environment for our employees and the citizens we serve. For more information, please contact me, county security manager, **Cindy Rubin** at cindy.rubin@fairfaxcounty.gov, 703-324-2308, TTY 711. ■

Deadline April 15

Be creative in the 24th *Courier* Photo Contest

Don't forget the *Courier* Photo Contest where you may gain recognition for that special picture you took.

This year, two new categories – Flora and Celebration Time – have been added. Categories, either color or black & white, are:

- a. **Snapshots** – These pictures are snapshot size and spontaneous
- b. **County-related** – pictures of county or school facilities, activities, or employees at work
- c. **Landscape/Architecture** –

outdoor scenes, sunsets, buildings and structures, urban landscapes, seascapes, cityscapes, farms


d. **Flora** – pictures of flowers, leaves, trees

e. **People** – photos of people

f. **Animals** – images of all kinds of animals, insects and butterflies

g. **Celebration Time** – photos of special events, holidays, parties, etc.

See all the rules and print the entry form on the Infoweb at <http://infoweb/courier>. ■



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Office of Public Affairs
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 551
Fairfax, VA 22035-0065

John Nash, editor
703-324-3197, john.nash@fairfaxcounty.gov
E-mail courier@fairfaxcounty.gov
FAX 703-324-2010
TTY 703-324-2935

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